



520 Tolling Implementation Committee Survey and Public Comment Summary

**Presentation to the Washington State Transportation
Commission**

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Staff to the Tolling Implementation Committee

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Outreach conducted November 10 – 30, 2008

- Launched comment period following November 10th Committee meeting.
- Open houses in Bellevue, Seattle and Mercer Island, with 221 attendees.
- **Briefings** to legislators, mayors and jurisdictions.
- Web survey launched on November 10, with over 7800 respondents and over 2600 written comments.



- Statistically-valid telephone survey with 1200 respondents
- Web page had over 11,000 unique visitors.

Comment Tallies

Over 10,500 “comments” received (including web survey)

Over 5,300 written comments from

Web survey: 2624

Other sources (open houses and mail): 316

Mercer Island petitioners: 2397

Representing all areas around the lake

Mercer Island

West side

East side

South end

North end

Phone Survey Fielding

Three step random sampling process:

- Used random digit dial sample of households within those areas of the travel shed in which lower levels of bridge use were likely**
- Used sample of 520 Bridge users**
- Used sample of I-90 Bridge users**

Administered the survey to a stratified random sample of 1,204 respondents:

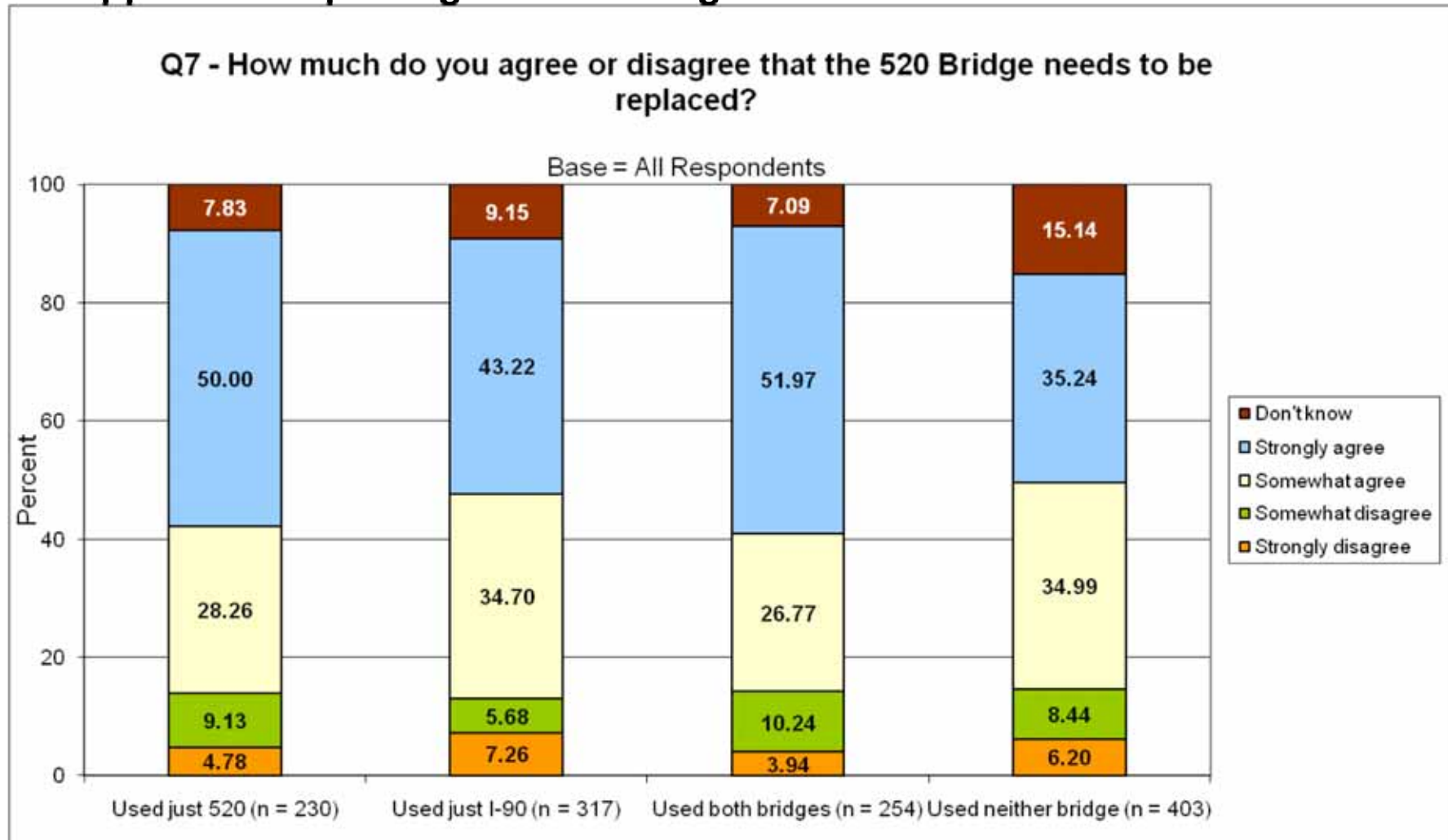
- Used just 520 Bridge in last week (n = 230)**
- Used just I-90 Bridge in last week (n = 317)**
- Used both bridges in last week (n = 254)**
- Used neither bridge in last week (n = 403)**

To reduce sample bias, at least four attempts were made to establish telephone contact at different times of the day and days of the week with every randomly selected phone number .

The overall margin of error for the survey is +/- 3 percent.

Key Findings from Phone Survey

Support for Replacing the 520 Bridge



Key Findings from Web Survey

Tolling Issues

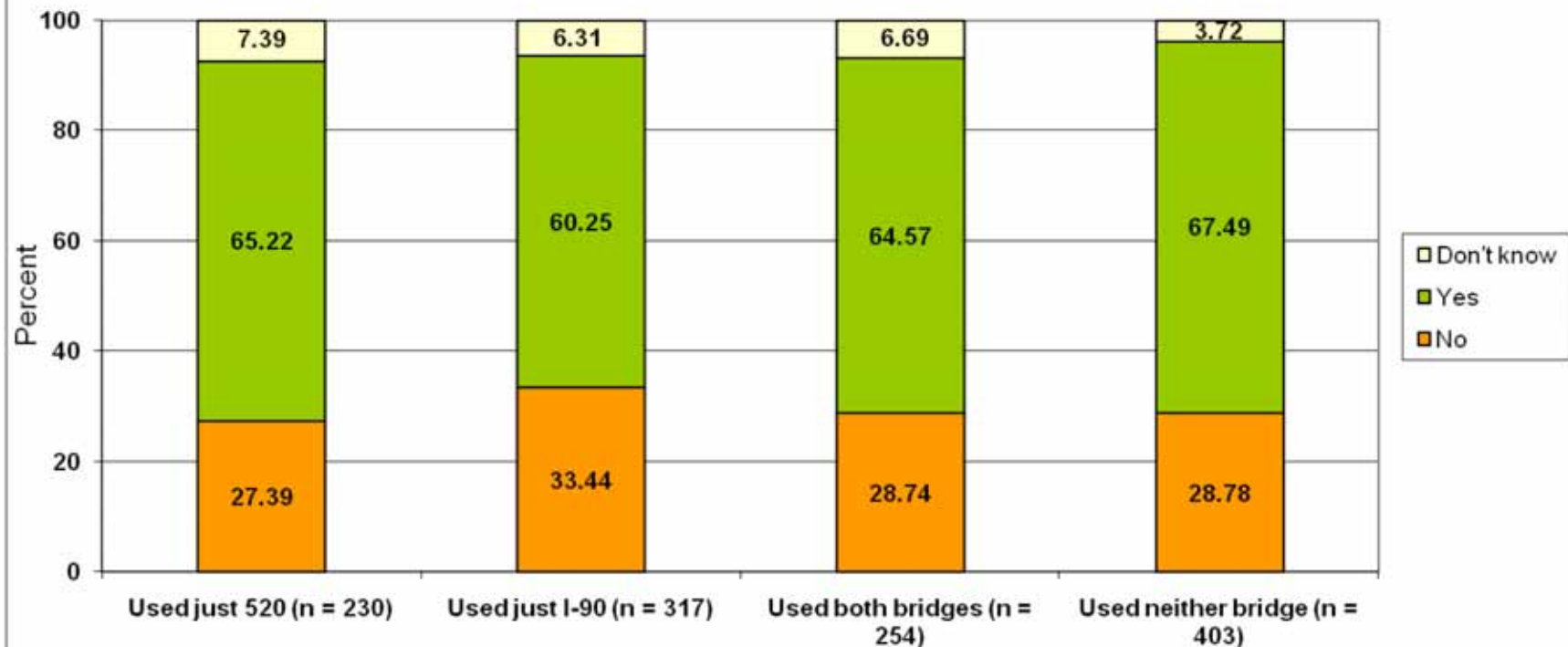
- Respondents support tolling to help fund the bridge by a nearly 2:1 margin (59% v 30%)
- Support goes up when they learn about electronic tolling and “no toll booths” (69%)
- Respondents support variable tolling by more than a 2:1 margin (65% to 31%)
- People liked reduced rates on weekends more than reduced rate mid-day, though both are favorable (65% and 55%)

Key Findings from Phone Survey

Support for Tolling the 520 Bridge

Q9 - Do you support paying for a portion of the 520 Bridge replacement project with tolls?

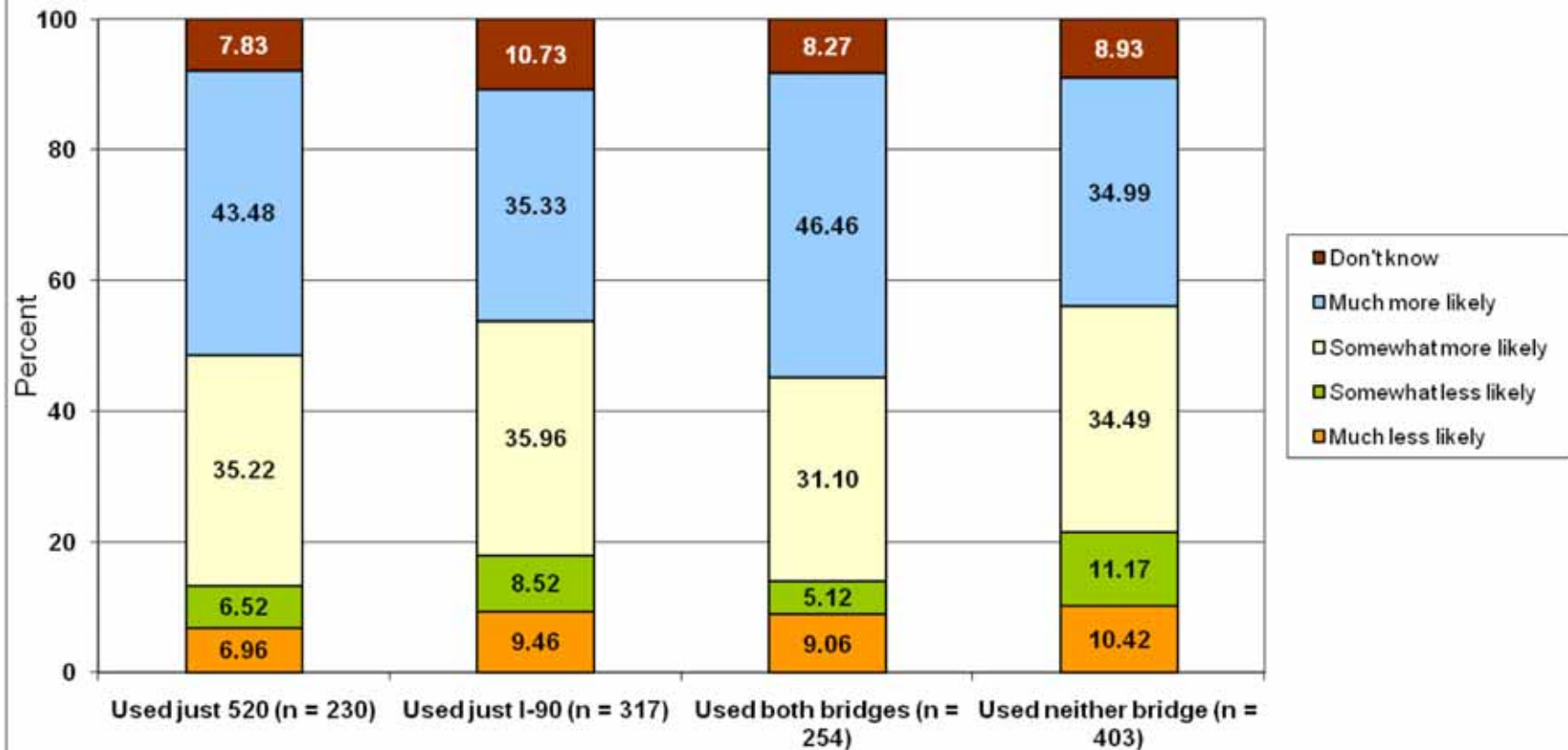
Base = All Respondents



Key Findings from Phone Survey

Support for Electronic Tolling

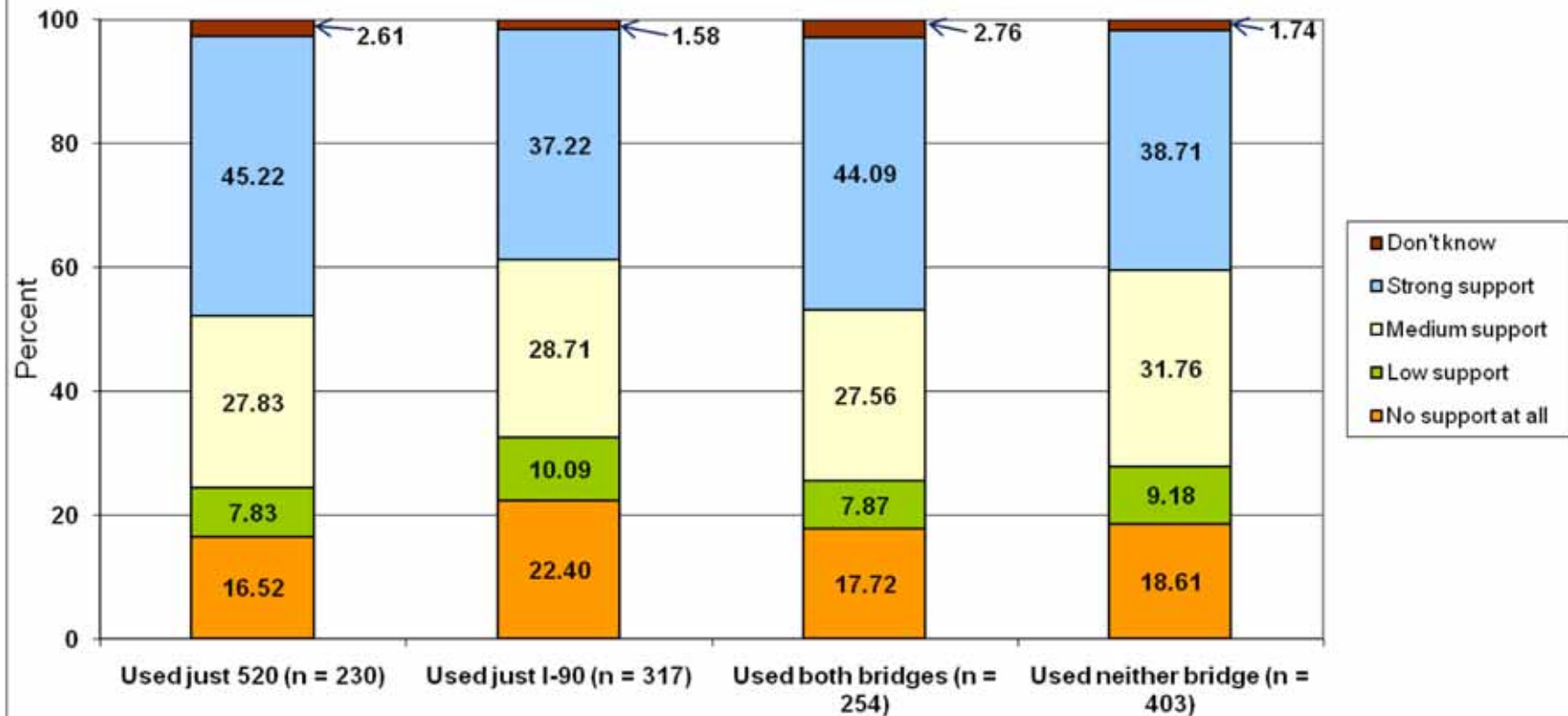
Q10 - Current technology allows tolls to be collected electronically as vehicles travel across the bridge at regular highway speeds. There will be no toll booths. Knowing this, does this make you more or less likely to support tolling of the 520 Bridge?



Key Findings from Phone Survey

Support for Variable Rate Tolling

Q17 - Toll rates on the bridges may vary by time of day – higher during morning and evening commute times, lower during other times of the day to reduce peak commute period congestion. This is known as variable rate tolling. How much would you support t



Key Findings from Web Survey

Timing

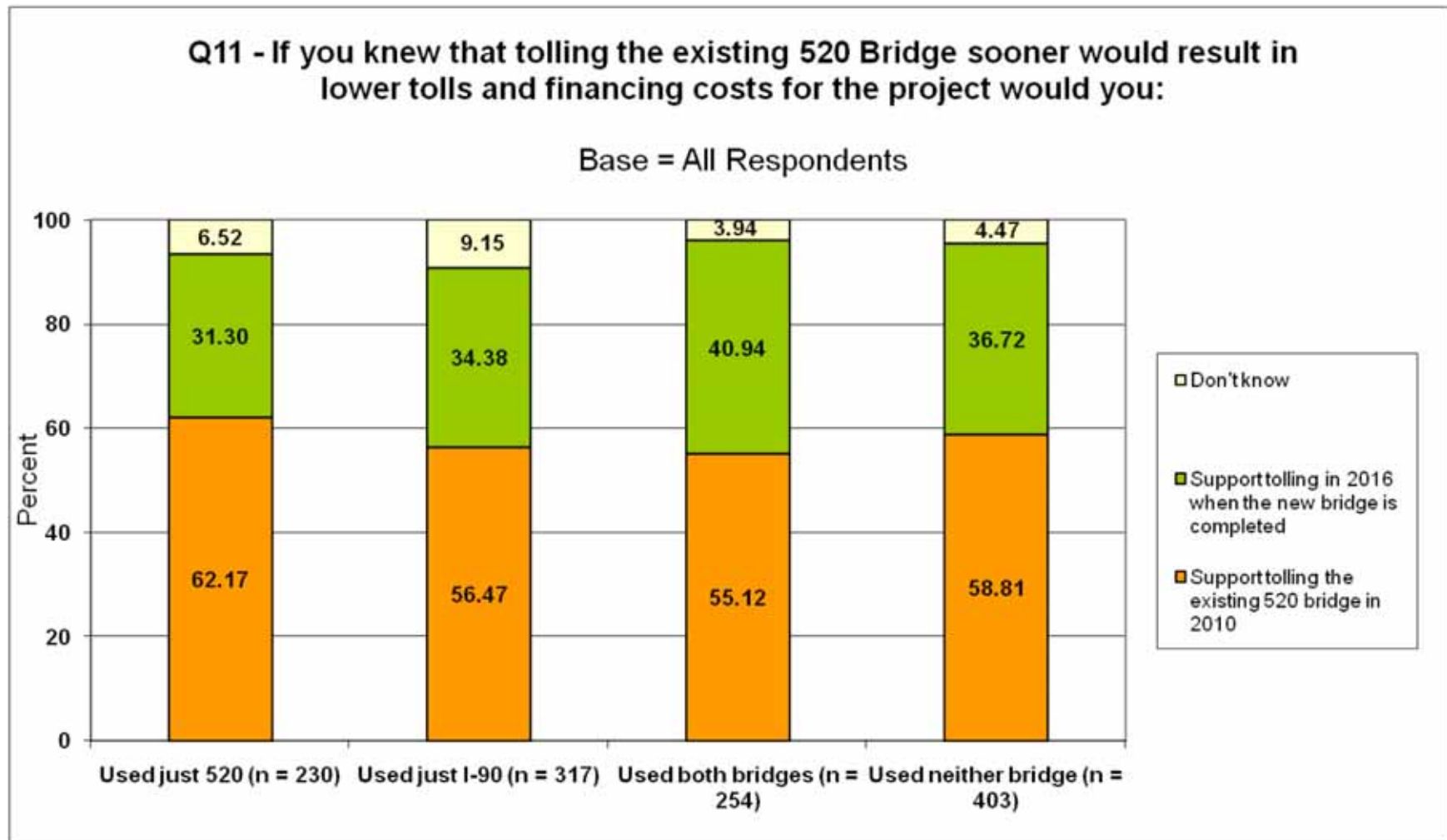
- Respondents support tolling in 2010 if it results in lower tolls and financing costs by a nearly 3:1 margin (60% v 23%)
- Support for tolling in 2010 goes down if it makes 520 faster, but slows down I-90 (55%)

Both Bridges

- Respondents support tolling both bridges with lower toll rates (61%) and to achieve faster trips (61%), but 39% of respondents opposed these two ideas.

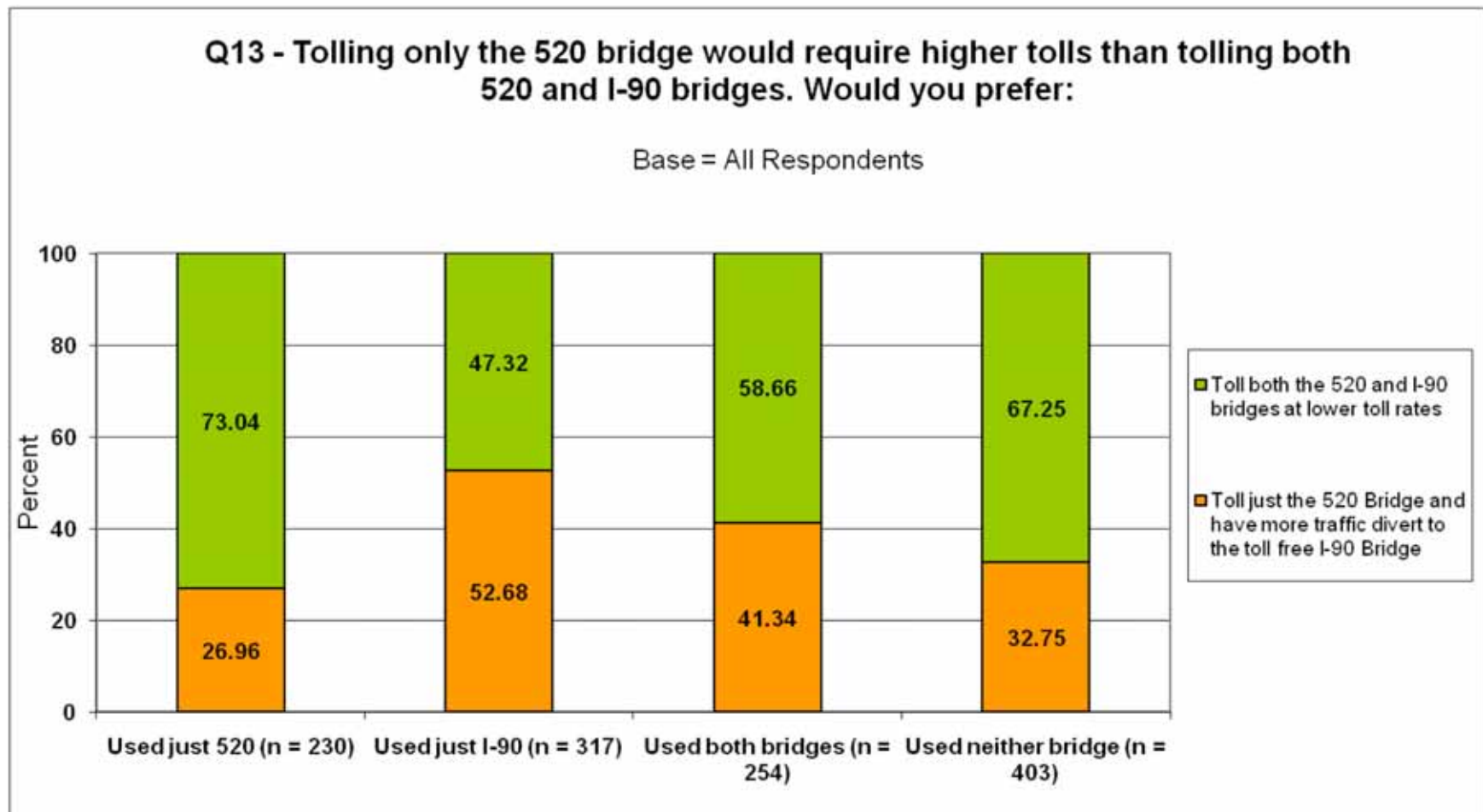
Key Findings from Phone Survey

Support Early Tolling If Results in Lower Tolls and Financing Costs



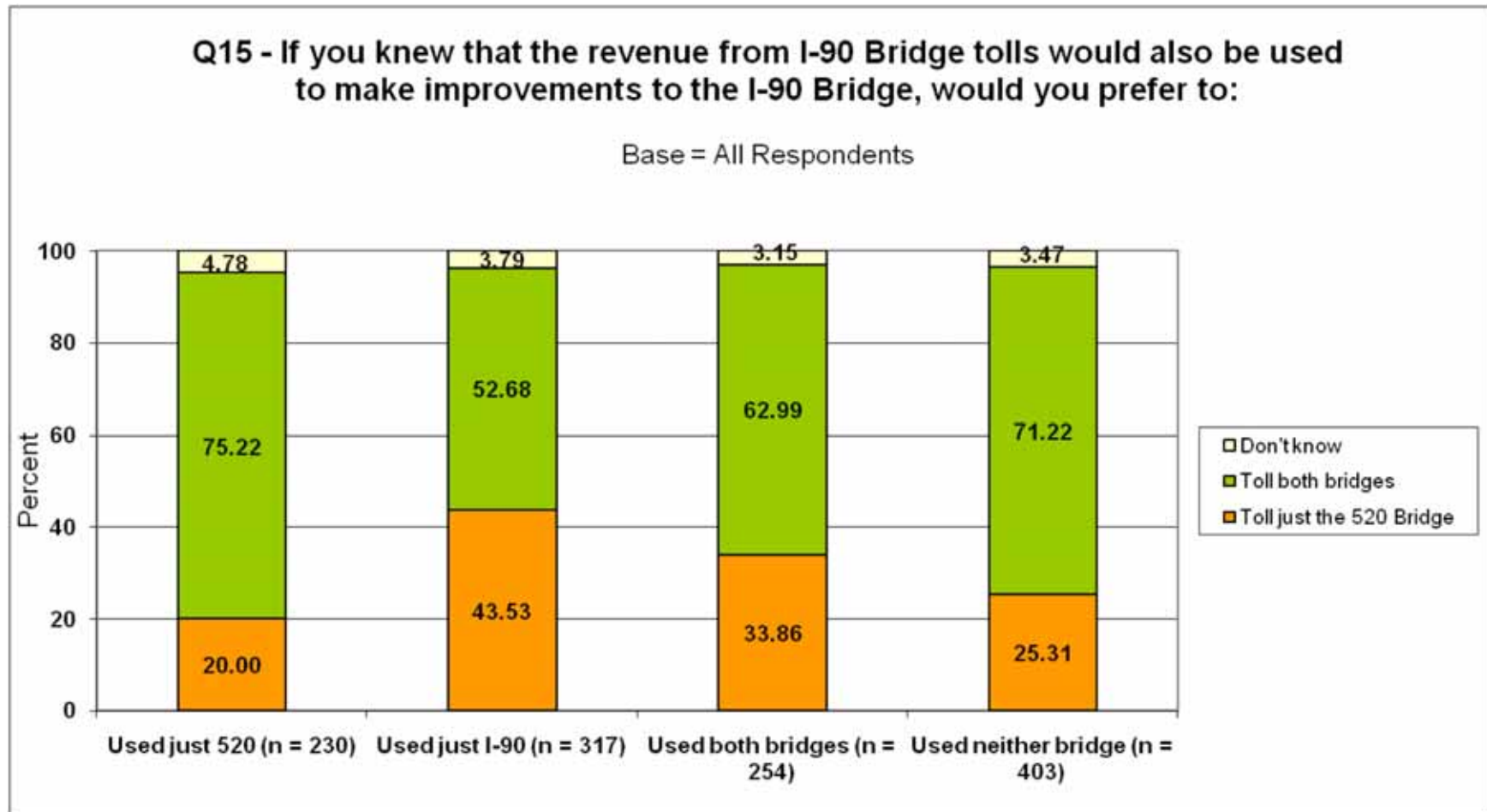
Key Findings from Phone Survey

Support for Tolling Both Bridges (except I-90 users) When Know That Tolling Both Bridges Results in Lower Tolls



Key Findings from Phone Survey

Support for Tolling Both Bridges Goes Up Among I-90 Users When They Know Improvements Will Be Made to I-90



Key Findings from Web Survey

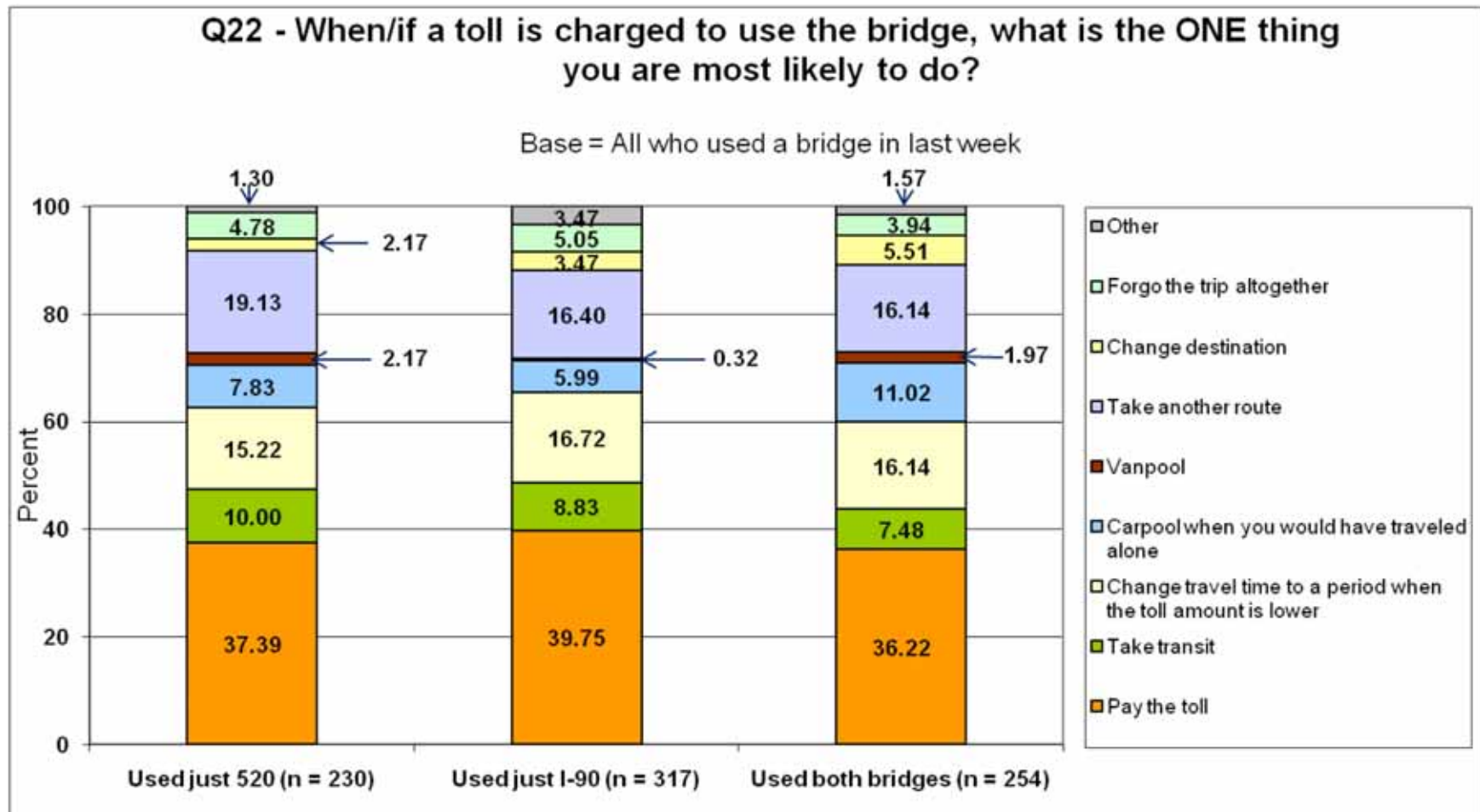
Diversion

The top three responses of what people would do when a toll is charged were:

- Pay the toll (30%)
- Take another route (26%) (with 61% of those choosing I-90)
- Take transit (17%)

Key Findings from Phone Survey

Most Will Pay Toll, or Change Route or Time of Trip



Web Survey Respondents

Bridge Users

- Almost 50% of said they generally use 520; about 25% use I-90 and just under 20% use both.
- 24% are regular commuters, using one of the bridges 5 days a week.
- Almost as many people (22.5%) said they didn't use either bridge the previous week.
- 18% said they used one of the bridges one day the previous week.

Time of Travel

- Of those who drive the bridges, 79% do so weekdays, and over half (54%) do so on weekends.
- The afternoon commute is the most typical travel time (64%) followed by morning commute (50%). Mid day and evening use is also relatively high with 41% and 33% respectively.

Phone Survey Respondents

Bridge Users

- Usage was divided among
 - **520 users (19%)**
 - **I-90 users (26%)**
 - **users of both bridges (21%)**
 - **those not using either bridge (33%).**

Time of Travel

- Lowest bridge usage was on the weekends (24-29%).
- The afternoon commute, the morning commute and midday travel were all about equally represented (46-48%). Evening use is relatively low (16%).

Web and Phone Survey Respondents

Travel habits and purpose

Web

- 67% said they drive alone
- 33% carpool with household members
- 23% take the bus

Work is the primary reason people use the bridge (56%) followed by recreational activities at 34% and 27% for shopping.

Phone

- 71% said they drive alone
- 33% carpool with household members
- 12% carpool with non-household members
- 6% take the bus

Work is the primary reason people use the bridges (51%) followed by recreational activities at 27% and 22% for shopping. Non-commute work related travel was 17%, visiting family/friends 18%.

Narrative Comments – Evaluation Criteria

Revenue Generation

- General trend towards generating revenue sooner, reducing costs to motorists

Reasonableness of toll

- Few responses, reflecting full spectrum

Diversion Effects

- Common across all areas, specific to where they live

Bridge Performance

- Variable tolling is favored

Narrative Comments – Key Themes - Without Petition

Mixed input on tolling 520

An equal number of comments (20%) were received favoring tolling, expressing concern about the tax burden and opposing tolling

Other common themes

17% opposed tolling both bridges

15% had questions about the process/decision-making

13% support increasing transit service

12% support tolling both bridges

10% concerned about use of funds, 520 funding and public involvement

Narrative Comments – Key Themes - With Petition

- 49% about tax burden.
- 48% oppose tolling both bridges.
- 47% opinions regarding process/decision-making.
- 44% about 520 project funding.
- 43% expressed concerns about environmental/social justice/fairness and Mercer Island exemptions.
- 42% concerned about geographic equity/fairness; local or regional governments and cost of living issues.
- 41% concerned with diversion to I-90

Next Steps for Tolling Implementation Committee

- **Draft report released at Committee meeting on January 7.**
- **Committee will circulate draft to citizens, stakeholders, local jurisdictions and legislators for comment.**
- **Committee adopts final report at meeting on January 28 and forwards report to the Governor and Legislature.**
- **For more information, visit 520 Tolling Implementation Committee website:**

build520.org